

**Comment Form – Information to inform the Summary of Issues**

**Project:** Alexandra Bridge Replacement Project  
**Proponent:** Public Services and Procurement Canada and National Capital Commission  
**Canadian Impact Assessment Registry No.:** 83444  
**Comment period end date:** April 24, 2022

Municipality Name: City of Ottawa	
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The Impact Assessment Agency of Canada invites your municipality to provide information it has available at this time on the Project and its potential effects or impacts (both positive and negative) to the environmental, health, social and economic conditions of your community. Your comments will inform the Summary of Issues<sup>1</sup> with respect to the Project and will be provided to the Proponent to address. You may use this form or use another format of your choice. You may find Figure 1 on page 10 of the Summary of the Initial Project Description useful in situating the Project.

All comments should be submitted via the **Submit a Comment** feature available on the Project's Canadian Impact Assessment Registry page (Reference 83444 at: <http://iaac-aeic.gc.ca/050/evaluations/proj/83444?culture=en-CA>). Letters and forms can be uploaded using this feature. If you have any difficulties submitting this way, please contact the Agency at [Alexandra@iaac-aeic.gc.ca](mailto:Alexandra@iaac-aeic.gc.ca) for assistance.

**1. Changes to the environment**

Describe how the Project could potentially cause changes to the environment that are important to your community.

From a transportation planning perspective, the Project will support active modes of travel as well as transit, which, when combined with the broader regional network of transit and AT facilities, has the potential to reduce GHG emissions.

**2a. Effects to social conditions**

Describe how the Project could potentially affect social conditions that are important to your community.

The closure of the bridge during construction will negatively impact pedestrians and cyclists who are currently using the crossing. It will also cause traffic to shift to other crossings, negatively impacting residents along the detour routes. Without sufficient measures to manage travel demand, congestion on the other interprovincial crossings may increase, impacting businesses and residents' quality of life.

Consider a safe educational viewing area for curious onlookers to watch the progression of the bridge deconstruction/reconstruction. It would be an excellent opportunity to encourage individuals to consider Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) and the Arts.

Consider opportunities to partner with educational institutions in both the City of Ottawa and the City of Gatineau for student internships and co-op placements as well as opportunities to broaden their knowledge i.e., seminars on a large capital project such as this and its impacts.

There are a few elements in the project that affect the City and that the local Councilor has heard about from residents and businesses to be reviewed and identified as part of the City of Ottawa goals and needs. They are as follows:

1. Having the right information (cost) to maintain/keep the same structure.

2. We have a reality of a Council vote on the STO loop (which needs dedicated infrastructure on this bridge)

<sup>1</sup> The Summary of Issues is a list of issues raised in the Planning Phase prepared by the Agency, as per section 14(1) of the *Impact Assessment Act*. This document provides the proponent with an understanding of issues and allows participants to see how their comments and concerns have been characterized.

3. We have design objectives for this important entry point into the City of Ottawa
4. We have evolving transportation objectives, particularly active transportation ones within this corridor

**2b. Effects to health conditions**

Describe how the Project could potentially affect health conditions that are important to your community.

The Project supports trips by active modes, which have many demonstrated health benefits.

2c. Effects to economic conditions

Describe how the Project could potentially affect economic conditions that are important to your community.

The Project provides an important mobility connection between Ottawa and Gatineau, supporting local businesses. It also contributes to creating a vibrant downtown environment, which helps to attract businesses and visitors to the region.

During construction, there is the potential for increased traffic congestion as drivers divert to alternative crossings, potentially impacting commercial vehicle operators and businesses.

3. Potential powers, duties or functions

List the potential powers, duties, or functions, including any permits, authorizations or by-laws, which your municipality may issue to enable the Project to proceed. For each, provide a summary indication of your current activities with the proponent (e.g. have received an application from the proponent or expecting an application from the proponent). For each, explain why your municipality may issue the potential power, duty, or function. For each, please include a description of engagement activities that would occur with Indigenous groups and public.

All work within the City of Ottawa right-of-way must follow the Road Activity Bylaw. This includes requiring municipal consent for underground impacts, and subsequent Road Cut, Road Closure and Temporary Construction Encroachment Permits. In advance of the issuance of any permits, the proponent is requested to reach out to [TMConstruction@ottawa.ca](mailto:TMConstruction@ottawa.ca) to discuss potential impacts of the project during construction. Based on the timelines of the Project and other adjacent competing project priorities and the need for traffic management coordination, the Project may be asked for schedule accommodations or physical modifications elsewhere in the Transportation Network to help with the overall network capacity to ensure a safe transportation system for all users, even during construction. In order to analyze this, the proponent may be asked for a broad Traffic Analysis due to the impact of this Project. Engagement with the Traffic Management Construction group should start a minimum of two years in advance of any proposed construction impacts.

4. Additional considerations under the impact assessment process

Are there any additional issues, operational policies such as those related to impact assessment or municipal by-laws (i.e. gender based analysis, sustainability, alternative means, traffic management, citizen engagement, and community knowledge) that you wish to note for the Agency’s consideration? <sup>2</sup>

All work within the transportation network must be analyzed, in advance of construction start, to determine the overall impact to the Transportation Network. The crossing will be closed to traffic, including active transportation, for approximately 3-4 years between 2028-2032. A Transportation Impact Assessment will be required to understand the traffic impacts during construction and post construction. Extensive consultation on all modes of transportation will be required with the City of Ottawa on the detours proposed. The City may ask for a broad traffic analysis, to help identify modifications to assist the network to provide safe transportation to all road users during construction. The proponent is asked to reach out directly to [TMConstruction@ottawa.ca](mailto:TMConstruction@ottawa.ca) to discuss further traffic management requirements.

Transportation Planning staff can provide information on the origin and destination patterns of current users of the Alexandra Bridge for the Ottawa end of the trip. This information may be helpful in establishing the traffic management plan, including an assessment of likely detour patterns and associated impacts.

As the project moves into the design phase, staff may have additional comments once more detailed information is available.

In addition to meeting functional mobility requirements, the design of the bridge should reflect its importance as a landmark and gateway to Ottawa. Please include consultation with the appropriate City staff as design proposals are developed.

It is strongly recommended that a technical advisory committee (TAC) in which various City departments/service areas (Public Works, Right of Way, Transportation Planning, Transportation Services, OC Transpo, Planning, Public Health and Heritage) can participate to ensure all relevant City policies, plans, and community needs are considered in the planning and design of the Project, including public consultation.

The City of Ottawa recommends that the Project proponent consults with the City’s Accessibility Advisory Committee on the various design options. The proponent may also be required to present to City standing committees such as (but not limited to) Built Heritage, Transportation, and City Council as required throughout the various phases of the Project.

<sup>2</sup> A link to *Impact Assessment Act* text can be found here:  
<https://www.canada.ca/en/impact-assessment-agency/corporate/acts-regulations.html>

## 5. General Comments on the Initial Project Description Summary Report:

### Climate Risk Vulnerability Assessment (pg. 41)

The assessment should consider impacts to active transportation users, including the need for shade and shelter, and rest areas.

### Table 7 – Planned Studies (pg. 42)

Does not mention traffic studies or the development of a traffic management plan for construction. The City requires these plans/studies from the Proponent to fully understand the impact of this Project on the City's traffic and transportation network. Mitigation of negative traffic impacts will be required.

### Functional Requirements (pg. 46)

Transportation Planning staff are generally supportive of the proposed bridge cross-section as illustrated in Figure 2, but may have further comments as the details are refined through the design process. The City's draft Transportation Master Plan (TMP) update includes an action to encourage the federal government to undertake a feasibility study for an interprovincial transit loop which would connect the downtowns of Ottawa and Gatineau using the Alexandra Bridge. As a result, the Project must include a flexible design for which the two vehicular lanes could be to transit in the future (tramway or light rail connection) – as described in the IPD. This protection for future conversion should also be considered in the design of the bridge approaches and connections.

The City's draft TMP includes a focus on healthy, equitable streets. Among other features, healthy streets include places to stop and rest, incorporate shade and shelter, offer things to see and do, and provide an environment where everyone feels welcome, safe, and relaxed. In the context of this project, relevant features may include frequent rest areas on the bridge with places to sit; shade and protection from the wind; and the provision of water fountains on the bridge approaches; and appropriate lighting to ensure a sense of personal security. Other features noted in the IPD will also contribute to these objectives, such as the use of Universal Design principles, provision of lighting, inclusion of interpretive panels (offering things to do), and consideration of winter maintenance needs for accessible use year-round.

### Mobility Mitigation Measures (pg. 85) – second paragraph in this section

The discussion is unclear, seems to mix measures to mitigate construction impacts with the design features of the bridge. What is meant by the reference to “temporary structures to remove potential barriers...”? What would these structures entail, and where would they be located?

The report acknowledges the challenges that will be faced by pedestrians and cyclists while the crossing is closed for construction; this will be a significant impact and a comprehensive mitigation plan is needed, with an explicit consideration of equity – a detour for pedestrians and cyclists must be considered.

### Mobility Mitigation Measures (pg. 85) – third paragraph in this section

The Traffic management plan must consider impacts to communities along expected detour routes (whether signed detours or informal detours), as well as wayfinding during construction. Measures to calm traffic along detour routes or discourage traffic from cutting through sensitive areas must be considered.

The Traffic management plan must include a strong focus on Travel Demand Management solutions to reduce vehicular travel at peak times and encourage the use of transit.

The discussion focuses on minimizing the length of detours to reduce emissions. While emissions are important, impacts to community residents (including noise, safety, and air quality) from detoured traffic should be given priority in assessing detour options.

### Mobility Mitigation Measures (pg. 85) – last paragraph on the page

There is a reference to a “protected laneway for mixed-use AT methods” but the conceptual cross-section shows dedicated, separate facilities for pedestrians and cyclists. Also, the term “laneway” is somewhat misleading, and overall, there is a lack of consistency throughout the document in how the AT facilities are described.

Consider describing walking and cycling as “sustainable modes of transportation”, rather than “alternative modes”; the City's goal is to make active modes the first choice for shorter trips.

### Mobility Mitigation Measures (pg. 86) – first paragraph

The text notes that commercial trucks would be “rerouted”; however, commercial vehicles are currently not allowed on this crossing. Would it be more appropriate to say that trucks would be “directed” to other bridges (as they are today)?

Table 10 & related discussion (pg. 89)

There appears to be an inconsistency in the units (Million\$ vs Billion\$)

Economic Context (pg. 88)

There is discussion on the economic benefits of the project, but less focus on the potential negative impacts, such as the impact of increased congestion during construction, which may impact commercial vehicle operators, commuters travelling to work, etc.

Gender-Based Violence (pg. 96)

Some of the options being “explored” are integral elements of the project (i.e., separated cycling and pedestrian facilities).

More explanation is needed for some of the bullets on how the option will specifically address gender-based violence.

Elizabeth Murphy, P.Eng., for Jeff McEwen, P.Eng.	
Print Name of responder	Signature
Director of Transportation Planning, Planning, Real Estate & Economic Department	24 April 2022
Title of responder	Date

Please provide your comments on the Summary of the Initial Project Description using the *Submit a Comment* feature on the Canadian Impact Assessment Registry **by April 24, 2022**. Thank you.